

## Bent Mountain Book Club Selections

2017

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### January 20<sup>th</sup>: *Barkskins*, Annie Proulx

*Barkskins* opens in New France in the late 18th century as Rene Sel, an illiterate woodsman makes his way from Northern France to the homeland to seek a living. Bound to a "seigneur" for three years in exchange for land, he suffers extraordinary hardship and violence, always in awe of the forest he is charged with clearing. In the course of this epic novel, Proulx tells the stories of Rene's children, grandchildren, and great grandchildren, as well as the descendants of his friends and foes, as they travel back to Europe, to China, to New England, always in quest of a livelihood or fleeing stunningly brutal conditions--war, pestilence, Indian attacks, the revenge of rivals. 717 pages.

### February 17<sup>th</sup>: *Dead Cold* (previously published as *A Fatal Grace*), Louise Penny

CC de Poitiers managed to alienate everyone in the hamlet of Three Pines, right up to the moment she died. When Chief Inspector Armand Gamache begins his investigation, it seems like an impossible murder: CC was electrocuted on a frozen lake, in front of the entire town, during the annual curling tournament. With compassion and courage, Gamache digs beneath the idyllic surface of village life to find long buried secrets, while his own enemies threaten to bring something even more chilling than the bitter winter winds to Three Pines.. 314 pages.

### March 18<sup>th</sup>: *Founding Mothers: The Women who Raised our Nation*, Cokey Roberts

*Founding Mothers* is an intimate and illuminating look at the fervently patriotic and passionate women whose tireless pursuits on behalf of their families--and their country--proved just as crucial to the forging of a new nation as the rebellion that established it. Drawing upon personal correspondence, private journals, and even favored recipes, Roberts reveals the often surprising stories of these fascinating women, bringing to life the everyday trials and extraordinary triumphs of individuals like Abigail Adams, Mercy Otis Warren, Deborah Read Franklin, Eliza Pinckney, Catherine Littlefield Green, Esther DeBerdt Reed and Martha Washington--proving that without our exemplary women, the new country might have never survived. 359 pages.

### April 15<sup>th</sup>: *Slow Road Home: a Blue Ridge Book of Days*, Fred First

A collection of essays reflecting on the author's life and sense of place along Goose Creek in Floyd County, Virginia. The book is a companion to First's blog *Fragments from Floyd*. 216 pages.

### May 20<sup>th</sup>: *Truevine*, Beth Macy

The true story of two African-American brothers who were kidnapped and displayed as circus freaks, and whose mother endured a 28-year struggle to get them back. The year was 1899 and the place a sweltering tobacco farm in the Jim Crow South town of Truevine, Virginia. George and Willie Muse were two little boys born to a sharecropper family. One day a white man offered them a piece of candy, setting off events that would take them around the world and change their lives forever. Captured into the circus, the Muse brothers performed for royalty at Buckingham Palace and headlined over a dozen sold-out shows at New York's Madison Square Garden. They were global superstars in a pre-broadcast era. But the very root of their success was in the color of their skin and in the outrageous caricatures they were forced to assume: supposed cannibals, sheep-headed freaks, even "Ambassadors from Mars." TRUEVINE is a compelling narrative rich in historical detail and rife with implications to race relations today. 420 pages.